SCS CC 282

EXCISE A/S CS - E. Powers

485

Rm. 1813

P78-34-2046

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY John Simms DATE 2-26-81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

February 10, 1978

Dear Senator Cranston:

Thank you for your inquiry of January 25 on behalf of [redacted] concerning the custody of the child of Mr. and Mrs. Tim Stoen. E.O. 12356 3.4(b)

All the parties to the case, currently in the courts in Guyana, are American citizens. The parents of the child are on one side and the People's Temple, a California religious organization which also operates in Guyana, on the other.

Our Ambassador and his staff in Guyana have taken an interest in the case, but have emphasized that the interest of the United States is confined to assuring that the matter is fairly and impartially adjudicated in the courts strictly on its merits and without outside interference from any quarter. Consistent with this position, the Embassy has avoided taking any sides in what is essentially a civil dispute between two groups of Americans. Nor has any pressure been brought by the Embassy on the Government of Guyana or its courts, which have yet to rule on the matter, in favor of one side or the other.

The inquiries made by the American Embassy on behalf of the child's parents were normal protective services which any American citizen abroad could expect to receive from his government. The inquiries were not in any way directed to the matter of the case which is presently before the courts.

The Honorable
Alan Cranston,
United States Senate.

I trust this information will assist you in replying to your constituent's letter. If you have any further questions you may direct them to Frank Tumminia, Officer-in-Charge of Guyana, ARA/CAR, Room 3242 or phone (202) 632-3449.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosures:

Correspondence returned.

Drafted:ARA/CAR:JGriffith:kc
02/06/78 22620

Clearances: L/ARA:PArmstrong
CA/SCS:EPowers
ARA:GLister

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